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C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 000219

SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE AND IPA. NSC FOR SHAPIRO/PASCUAL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/02/2019

TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PHUM](#) [ASEC](#) [IS](#) [PBTS](#) [PTER](#)

SUBJECT: SETTLER ATTACKS IN HEBRON AND NORTHERN WEST BANK

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. According to NGO B'tselem, Hebron settlers attacked three Palestinian women January 28. The IDF subsequently arrested two of the Palestinian women for filming the attack with a B'tselem-provided camera. In the northern West Bank, Havat Gilad settlers attacked Palestinian farmers January 28. According to NGO Yesh Din, the farmers fought back and now fear settler reprisals. End summary.

Incident in Hebron Unresolved  
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¶2. (C) NGO B'tselem Research Director Yael Stein told Poloff January 29 that several Hebron settlers attacked three Palestinian women from the Abu Aisha family on January 28 in Hebron's Tel Rumeida neighborhood. Stein said one of the women filmed the attack with a camera from B'tselem's "Shooting Back" project until IDF soldiers confiscated the camera and arrested two of the women. The head of the ICRC office in Hebron, Matteo Benatti, told Poloff January 29 that the two women were held at Kiryat Arba settlement police station for "attacking military personnel" until bail was paid late January 28.

¶3. (C) According to Benatti, the women denied attacking IDF soldiers and claimed to have been arrested for filming the settler violence. Stein said the Israeli police promised to return the camera to B'tselem, but it is uncertain whether the case will go to trial, or if the video tape will be used as evidence.

Scuffle near Havat Gilad  
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¶4. (C) NGO Yesh Din activist Lior Yavne told Poloff January 30 that approximately 20 settlers from Havat Gilad settlement, east of Qalqilia, threw stones on January 28 at Palestinian farmers working their land near Farata village. Yavne said the farmers threw stones back at the settlers, and both settlers and Palestinians were lightly injured in the scuffle. He said the Farata farmers are reluctant to file a complaint against the settlers, fearing reprisals by the settlers or punishment by the IDF.

WALLES